



21st Year, 4th Issue
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“

So runs my dream;
but what am I?
An infant crying
in the night
An infant crying
for the light
And with no language,
but a cry.

– Alfred Lord Tennyson

”

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Communicator

Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing



Bobbie Beth's Tidbits...

Holidays are now at full speed! The new administration of our state under Governor Fletcher's leadership is at full speed! The "How to Effectively Talk with your Legislators" workshop led by Senator Tom Buford and Senator Dan Kelly was enlightening and educational for everyone who was there. Following the workshop, the Legislative Action Coalition Revisited meeting took place and legislative agenda impacting deaf and hard of hearing individuals was revisited. We explored how to be more effective with educating new legislators and the new Governor on the greater needs for efficient and effective services for deaf and hard of hearing citizens.

Elsewhere in this issue, you will see Dr. Trish Freeman, our own KCDHH chair stressing the importance of accepting diversity within the deaf and hard of hearing community and how the diversity of our community will help establish a unified legislative front in addressing changes, in a proactive manner, for the benefit of our deaf and hard of hearing children. Through a collaborative effort with the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), this edition of the newsletter is focused predominately on the status of the various stakeholder groups that were established by the Kentucky Department of Education at the direction of the State Board of Education. These groups were established to give input on various issues such as early identification, supporting parents and families, and closing the achievement gap. This is a status report on where we are with various initiatives and reports that have been made and will be

made to the State Board of Education between now and February 2004. Then in May 2004, the KDE will design a plan to begin a long overhaul in doing the business of educating our kids, with no child left behind, especially a deaf or hard of hearing child. Special thanks must go to Wilton McMillan and his team members of the KDE Oversight Team for putting together this article allowing us a glimpse of what the KDE is doing. If you need to talk to him, his e-mail address is wcmcmilla@kde.state.ky.us and phone number, 502-564-4970. The balance of the KDE stakeholder group meeting dates and regular updates on activities are posted under the Bulletin Board at the www.kcdhh.org. These meetings are open to the public. Let's all participate!

I came across this little poem and was struck on how apt it is for a small deaf or hard of hearing child today who has little or no language skills.

So runs my dream; but what am I?
An infant crying in the night
An infant crying for the light
And with no language, but a cry.

– Alfred Lord Tennyson

Shall we not become advocates for our children? Shall we not pursue those who can provide light for our children? Join in! Be a part of the solution! Demand that for our kids!

Bobbie Beth

Commission Members

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Representative

Marcie Jeffers
Cabinet for Health Services
Representative

Pat Huddleston
Parent Representative

Shannon Grider
Kentucky Registry of Interpreters
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Representative

The deadline to submit information and articles for the March 2004 edition of the Communicator is February 2004. All materials provided through KCDHH are available in accessible format upon request.



Chairperson's Article

As I contemplate my role as chairperson of KCDHH, I have been thinking about what should be the focus of my efforts this year. As a mother of three children, two of whom are deaf and "hear" with cochlear implants, often I have been faced with questions regarding our choice of communication. Why do we not use sign language? Why did we choose the "oral" route?

The debate over communication options has continued for many years and often categorizes people into "oral" vs "Deaf". I think it is important for us to realize that there is room for all persons, with all types and degrees of hearing loss, who use all types of communication options, in our community. The National Center for Health Statistics (<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs>) reports that 22 million Americans are deaf or hard-of-hearing. How would it be possible for 22 million Americans to have the same values, ideals and approach to communication?

There is one common challenge, however, that all persons with hearing loss face - access to communication. This one challenge is faced by individuals with hearing loss regardless of their choice of communication modality. For the deaf who

use sign language as their primary mode of communication it is access to sign language interpreters in schools, in the health care delivery system, and in the workplace that is of utmost importance. For the hard-of-hearing who speak but have problems with hearing and therefore understanding spoken language, hearing aids, real-time captioning and technologies such as C-print or I-Communicator may be needed for communication access. Those within our community who have cochlear implants also need technology and services to ensure access to communication. A working implant, access to audiologists for mapping and auditory training, modified classrooms in schools for improved acoustics or perhaps an FM system to provide additional auditory input may be needed to ensure communication access.

Because the basic challenge is the same for all of the separate groups, I see KCDHH as an organization that can focus on uniting our community by advocating for and ensuring access to communication for all persons with hearing loss.

Please help me unite our community by accepting diversity and realizing that your individual struggle for access to communication in your daily life is the same as other members in the deaf and hard of hearing community - regardless of whether they sign, are oral and wear hearing aids, or hear with cochlear implants. Diversity is not bad, it enriches our community and provides opportunities for all individuals.

Commission Staff

Bobbie Beth Scoggins, Ed.D.
Executive Director

Rachel Morgan, Interpreter Relations Coordinator
Anita Dowd, Information Program Coordinator
Rowena Holloway, Program Coordinator
Kevin Kreutzer, Network Analyst I
Tony Lowe, Information Systems Supervisor
Virginia L. Moore, State Interpreter Administrator
Dana Parker, Executive Staff Advisor
Sharon White, Document Processing Specialist II
Julie Posey, Executive Secretary
Sereta Campbell, Executive Staff Interpreter
Wilma Wright, Administrative Assistant

American Institutes for Research Study and Recommendations

The Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) and the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) have been carefully reviewing the performance of its two state schools, the Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB) and the Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) for at least four years. In 2001, the KBE contracted with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to conduct an intensive comprehensive six-month study of program offerings and facilities at KSB and KSD. The AIR report was presented to the KBE in June, 2002. It contained findings and recommendations from KSB and KSD as well as statewide services for students who are Blind/Visually Impaired (B/VI) and Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH). The AIR report contained twelve (12) major recommendations which are:



1. Early identification and intervention should be bolstered to include all infants and toddlers qualifying for B/VI and D/HH services across the state.
2. A stronger commitment towards strengthening family involvement is needed, including family-oriented services such as parental education and counseling throughout the child's education.
3. In order to have effective early intervention programs, increased family involvement, and viable services for B/VI and D/HH children of all ages, appropriate service alternatives must be

brought closer to where these children reside through cooperative structures.

4. The roles of KSB and KSD as statewide resources need to be more clearly defined and include proactive responsibilities such as tracking all B/VI and D/HH children in the state and assisting the state in meeting their needs.
5. KSB and KSD need to develop clearer philosophies of service and purpose.
6. As more children with complex needs enter KSD and KSB, additional evaluation of the skills and services necessary to address the needs of these children will be needed. One of the two schools should develop specialized services for deaf-blind students.
7. More needs to be done to train B/VI and D/HH professionals and to retain them in these fields. This is especially true in areas in which personnel shortages are the greatest.
8. Increased and redirected investments in technology and vocational training programs are needed, while continuing to hold B/VI and D/HH students to the same academic standards as all students statewide.
9. While we believe that B/VI and D/HH children are able to learn and should be held to the same academic standards as others, we also recognize that these students have additional learning needs. To facilitate achievement of a broader range of educational objectives and to include their additional learning needs, D/HH and B/VI children should have an additional extended-academic year, extended day, or additional years of public schooling programs available to them as needed.
10. The KDE should appoint a director to oversee services received by all

B/VI and D/HH students statewide, ages birth to 21.

11. State funding for B/VI and D/HH students should be revised to allow the funds needed to provide high quality services to B/VI and D/HH children follow them to their most appropriate placement.
12. Changes in the physical plant of both schools are needed, with KSD in need of substantial renovation and alterations.

The aforementioned recommendations set out the needs of these students; however, it is the responsibility of the KBE and KDE staff to determine how to implement them. In order to develop a comprehensive implementation plan, the twelve (12) AIR recommendations were distilled into eight (8) major issues. The KBE instructed the KDE staff to develop a process to solicit stakeholder input around these eight areas. The result was the establishment of the sixteen (16) stakeholder groups described below. The first seven are statewide and the last nine are regional. These stakeholder groups would serve in an advisory capacity to help the KBE formulate a plan for statewide services. The statewide stakeholder groups will report to the KBE in February, 2004. Four of the regional groups reported to the KBE in October and the other five will report in December, 2003. Ultimately, the KBE will take all the reports and develop a comprehensive plan for educational services for D/HH and B/VI students. This plan should be completed by June, 2004.



Status Report on the Work o



Early Identification

The “Early Identification” stakeholder group began their work in November of 2002 by identifying and prioritizing key issues facing our state in working toward quality educational programs for young children (Birth – Age 5) who have sensory losses. The three issues that were prioritized for attention were: 1) the need for early identification of children with appropriate follow-up provided; 2) the need for qualified personnel in the field to address the needs of young children with sensory losses; and 3) the need for families to have access to information and resources that will enable them to become informed advocates for their children. After further brainstorming they decided to divide up into three sub-groups focusing on three main areas: 1) personnel competencies; 2) outreach to the medical community; and 3) clearinghouse. The Early Identification stakeholder group presented a preliminary draft of their work as of that date to the Kentucky Board of Education during the June, 2003 board meeting. They have continued to work as a group to further refine their work. They have met twice since the board meeting and will meet again on December 1, 2003.



Supporting Parents and Families

The “Supporting Parents & Families” stakeholder group first met in April, 2003. They are looking closely at the possible establishment of a mechanism that would provide parents and families with support in each region throughout

the state for both B/VI and D/HH students. They see this as a mechanism for providing information on available resources and educating parents and families to be advocates for their children. They have done some brainstorming on the possible establishment of two clearinghouses, one for each disability with exclusive accompanying toll free numbers. One of the top priorities being discussed within this stakeholder group is to establish parent /family orientation for all curriculum options and legal rights. In their process of formulating recommendations, the group endorsed a study of four questions which were central to the question of parents and family support. The four questions have to do with: 1) appropriate information about resources, options, legal rights, etc. available to parents and families at all stages of the child’s life from birth – 21; 2) parents and families having the necessary skills to be fully involved in their child’s education (e.g. sign language, Braille, etc.); 3) parents and families having the opportunity to interact with other parents and families in a meaningful way (for support, information exchange, etc.); 4) parents and families having the opportunity to interact with the school system in a meaningful way (to provide input, receive information). This stakeholder group will review the above and hopes to present its final recommendations to the KBE in February, 2004.

Closing the Achievement Gap



The “Closing the Achievement Gap” stakeholder group began in August of 2003. The charge of this stakeholder group is to look at the current status

of the education of children who are D/HH and B/VI in the state and to recommend strategies to ensure the achievement of proficiency of these children. The discussions have ranged from issues relating to all students reaching proficiency by 2014 to increasing the number of appropriate role models for students. They are working to recommend strategies and actions that would describe how the achievement gaps of D/HH and B/VI children could be addressed. Some goals that they are looking at recommending are in the areas of technology that would enable all D/HH and B/VI children in Kentucky to have access to state of the art technology, financial/monetary issues that impact services for D/HH and B/VI students and human resources that would increase the academic performance of students who are D/HH and B/VI.



Serving Students With Dual and Complex Impairments

The “Serving Students With Dual & Complex Impairments” stakeholder group commenced its work in June, 2003. This stakeholder group has been charged with making recommendations that would acknowledge and recognize that students with dual, complex or severe sensory impairments may require an array of services that can be provided most effectively by trained professionals, in a variety of settings. The stakeholders have identified issues that indicate a need to educate parents, family members and consumers on choices and options; hire and retain qualified personnel; and to utilize existing

f the 16 Stakeholder Groups

resources more efficiently. Some external or environmental factors that have a negative impact on these students identified by the group were general lack of awareness, philosophical differences, cultural differences and assessment. They have listed a targeted audience who might be involved in providing all students with meaningful instruction and opportunities for inclusion.



Increasing the Number of Service Providers

The “Increasing the Number of Service Providers” stakeholder group first convened to address this issue in May of 2003. The stakeholders are looking at what is needed to address the shortage of interpreters, teachers, audiologists, speech pathologists, orientation & mobility specialists and all other service providers that work with D/HH and B/VI children. This group has divided its discussion into three major areas: 1) recruitment of service providers; 2) ongoing professional development for current providers to give them the specialized skills necessary for working effectively with this student population; and 3) retention of service providers already serving these students. The group plans to make recommendations on each of these areas.

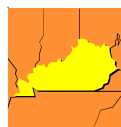


Comprehensive High Schools

The “Comprehensive High Schools” stakeholder group first came together to look at this topic in June, 2003. Assessment results from KSD as well as KSB and findings showed that the

number of D/HH and B/VI students who make successful transition from high school to adult life is unacceptably low. This finding is one of the reasons why this stakeholder group was established. The stakeholders are charged with making recommendations for a comprehensive high school program for D/HH students and B/VI students. It has been recommended that KSD and KSB high schools would be open to all D/HH and B/VI students in the state but this availability would not preclude a local or a regional program from serving these students at the high school level. The stakeholders are recommending that all students receive a rigorous and varied curriculum that would be achieved through virtual high schools and courses in local district high schools (for language, electives, enrichment, etc.). Other recommendations included study skills classes, a pre-requisite for higher-level classes and summer school for credit (not enrichment). They are also looking at the comprehensive high schools offering state of the art technology as well as state of the art assistive and adaptive technology (i.e. real time captioning for when a teacher speaks and software that is Deaf-friendly). At this point, all the above recommendations are preliminary; the final recommendations from this committee will go to the KBE in February, 2004.

Expanding Outreach Services



The “Expanding Outreach Services” stakeholder group began meeting in September of 2003. This stakeholder group is identifying ways to extend the expertise of professionals at KSD &

KSB and beyond the on-campus educational services of KSD and KSB to local schools and regional programs. They are also looking at redefining “outreach” that would promote more collaboration in each region of Kentucky. This would involve providing consultation (including onsite) to teachers and staff in the local school districts who are serving D/HH and B/VI students. In their initial meeting they did some extensive brainstorming that raised numerous issues including increasing the personnel providing outreach programs/services, tracking all of the D/HH and B/VI students who move from district to district in Kentucky and professional development activities for all service providers, etc. The recommendations of the regional stakeholder groups will be reviewed by this group since the regional reports help to identify the local needs that the outreach services of both schools can address.

For more information regarding the Stakeholder Groups, please contact one of the following:

KDE Oversight Team for B/VI&D/HH Educational Services

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Intervention and Services Closer to Home

In order to provide a true continuum of educational services, it is necessary to determine methods of providing more comprehensive services closer to the student's home. However, rather than have a statewide stakeholder group trying to determine local needs, it was decided to use the special education cooperative areas as a way to look at current local services and the needs of their students. The special education cooperatives were established several years ago to assist local school districts by providing staff or services to local districts in order to supplement unmet needs. It seemed logical to use these cooperatives to help address the unmet needs of D/HH and B/VI students. There are eleven special education cooperatives. For purposes of this process, four of these cooperatives combined into two stakeholder groups due to similar concerns and needs. Consequently, there are nine regional stakeholder groups that have met to address these issues. The directors of each special education cooperative, along with their staffs, have played an indispensable role in helping to organize and facilitate each group.

Western Kentucky Educational Cooperative (WKEC)

(Ballard, Caldwell, Calloway, Carlisle, Christian, Crittenden, Dawson Springs, Fulton County, Fulton Independent, Graves, Henderson, Hickman, Hopkins, Livingston, Lyon, Marshall, Mayfield, McCracken, Muhlenberg, Murray, Paducah, Providence, Trigg, Union and Webster)

The Western Kentucky Educational Cooperative regional stakeholder group began their work in April of 2003. They plan to present their final report of what is needed in their region of the state at the December KBE meeting.



Caveland Educational Cooperative/River Region Educational Cooperative

(CAVELAND: Allen, Barren, Bowling Green, Butler, Caverna, Cumberland, Edmonson, Glasgow, Green, Hart, Logan, Metcalfe, Monroe, Russellville, Simpson, Todd and Warren)

(RIVER REGION: Breckenridge, Cloverport, Daviess, Elizabethtown, Grayson, Hancock, Hardin, LaRue, McLean, Meade, Ohio, Owensboro and West Point)

The Caveland Educational Cooperative/River Region Educational Cooperative regional stakeholder group first convened to look at their regions in April, 2003. They presented their final report at the October KBE meeting.

Jefferson County Educational Cooperative (Jefferson / KSB)

The Jefferson County Educational Cooperative regional stakeholder

group (which includes the city of Louisville) began meeting in February of 2003. They presented their final report to the KBE at the October meeting.

Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative (OVEC)

(Anchorage, Bullitt, Carroll, Eminence, Gallatin, Grant, Henry, Oldham, Owen, Shelby, Spencer and Trimble)

The Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative regional stakeholder group first met in June, 2003 to look at the needs in their region. They plan to present their final report at the December KBE meeting.



Northern Kentucky Educational Cooperative (NKEC)

(Beechwood, Bellevue, Boone, Campbell, Covington, Dayton, Erlanger-Elsmere, Ft. Thomas, Kenton, Ludlow, Newport, Pendleton, Silver Grove, Southgate, Walton-erona and Williamstown)

The Northern Kentucky Educational Cooperative regional stakeholder group began their stakeholder work in June of 2003. They plan to present their final report at the December KBE meeting.

Central Kentucky Educational Cooperative (CKEC)

(Anderson, Bardstown, Bourbon, Boyle, Burgin, Clark, Danville, Frankfort, Franklin, Fayette, Harrison, Harrodsburg, Jessamine, Marion, Mercer, Montgomery, Nelson, Nicholas, Paris, Powell, Scott, Washington, Woodford and KSD)

The Central Kentucky Educational Cooperative regional stakeholder group began meeting in April, 2003. They plan to present their final report at the December KBE meeting.



Upper Cumberland Educational Cooperative/Wilderness Educational Cooperative

(UPPER CUMBERLAND: Barbourville, Bell, Clay, Corbin, East Bernstadt, Harlan County, Harlan Independent, Jackson County, Knox, Laurel, McCreary, Middlesboro, Pineville, Pulaski, Rockcastle, Whitley and Williamsburg)

(WILDERNESS TRAIL: Adair, Berea, Campbellsville, Casey, Clinton, Estill, Garrard, Lincoln, Madison, Monticello, Russell County, Science Hill, Somerset, Taylor and Wayne)

The Upper Cumberland Educational Cooperative/Wilderness Trail Educational Cooperative stakeholder

group first came together to look at the needs in their respective regions in May of 2003. They presented their final report to the KBE at the October meeting.

Big East Educational Cooperative

(Ashland, Augusta, Bath, Boyd, Bracken, Carter, Elliot, Fairview, Fleming, Greenup, Johnson, Lawrence, Lewis, Martin, Mason, Menifee, Morgan, Paintsville, Raceland, Robertson, Rowan and Russell Independent)

The Big East Educational Cooperative regional stakeholder group had their first meeting in June, 2003. They plan to present their final report at the December KBE meeting.

Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative (KVEC)

(Breathitt, Floyd, Hazard, Jackson Independent, Jenkins, Knott, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Magoffin, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Pikeville and Wolfe)

The Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative brought together stakeholder members for their first meeting in May of 2003. They presented their final report to the KBE at the October meeting.

On behalf of the Kentucky Board of Education, the Department of Education expresses its sincere appreciation for all the stakeholders' input and especially their time taken out of their busy schedules to serve as stakeholders. After all the stakeholder groups have presented their final reports to the Board of Education in December and February, the KDE staff will provide

another update on the status of the statewide plan for students who are D/HH and B/VI.

New Staff Bios



My name is Rachel Morgan, Interpreter Referral Specialist for KCDHH. My main duty is filling the interpreter requests for state agencies. I come from a deaf family and am currently pursuing a degree in Business Administration. I hold an NAD Level IV certification. I look forward to meeting and working with everyone here in Kentucky.



I am Sereta Campbell, Executive Staff Interpreter. My main responsibilities are providing interpreting services for the Executive Director and coordinating RID testing opportunities. I am originally from Virginia and come to Kentucky by way of Minnesota. I hold certification from RID (CI/CT).

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Happy
Holidays

